CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

CD/1623
8 August 2000

ENGLISH
Original: RUSSIAN

LETTER DATED 4 AUGUST 2000 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT TRANSMITTING THE TEXT OF A STATEMENT BY THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS CONCERNING THE KAZAKH-UNITED STATES CALIBRATING EXPERIMENT "OMEGA 3" AT THE FORMER SEMIPALATINSK TEST SITE

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of a statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan concerning the joint Kazakh-United States calibrating experiment "Omega 3" at the former Semipalatinsk test site.

I should be grateful if this statement could be issued as an official document of the Conference on Disarmament and distributed to the delegations of all member States of the Conference and non-member States participating in its work.

(Signed): Nurlan DANENOV
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of the
Republic of Kazakhstan
Head of delegation to the Conference
on Disarmament

Statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan

On 29 July 2000, at the former Semipalatinsk test site, in horizontal tunnel 160 in the Degelen mountain range, an explosion was conducted of 100 metric tons of granulotol, resulting in the destruction of the last horizontal tunnel intended for nuclear weapon tests.

This was the third in the series of Kazakh-United States calibrating experiments conducted at the test site.

At the same time as destroying the horizontal tunnel, the experimental explosion was used to test and calibrate the international nuclear test monitoring system under the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty, to which the Republic of Kazakhstan is also a party.

The information gained from these experiments will enable the international community to detect and more precisely identify nuclear explosions (distinguishing them from earthquakes and explosions of conventional explosives) and thereby ensure effective monitoring of compliance with the provisions of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty and to set in place the sort of monitoring systems which would render impossible the conduct at any point on the globe of secret nuclear tests undetectable by the international community.

The "Omega 3" experiment is of particular significance as it has successfully concluded the five-year joint Kazakh-United States programme to destroy the nuclear weapons test infrastructure, comprising the closure of the horizontal tunnels and the destruction of the vertical shafts at the Semipalatinsk test site.

Astana, 2 August 2000